



USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

# GAIN Report

Global Agriculture Information Network

Template Version 2.09

Required Report - public distribution

**Date:** 4/5/2004

**GAIN Report Number:** GM4015

## Germany

### Biotechnology

## Aggressive Greenpeace Campaign against GMO Labeled Food Products

**2004**

**Approved by:**

Richard Petges  
U.S. Embassy

**Prepared by:**

Dietmar Achilles

---

**Report Highlights:**

On April 2, 2004, Greenpeace Germany started a new aggressive campaign to stigmatize GMO-labeled food products. This Greenpeace campaign parallels the German Bundesrat decision to reject the current version of the German gentech law proposal. The conservative party majority in the Bundesrat is demanding practical liability rules for GMO crop production.

---

Includes PSD Changes: No  
Includes Trade Matrix: No  
Unscheduled Report  
Berlin [GM1]  
[GM]

**Biotechnology** - Greenpeace stepping up its opposition against GMO Products as the Bundestag sends the proposed genetechnology law to the Conciliation Committee

On April 2, 2004, Greenpeace (GP) Germany started a new very aggressive campaign against food products containing GMO ingredients or derived from GMOs. GP encourages German consumers to act as **gene detectives in supermarkets**. These 'detectives' are requested by GP to search packaged foods for labeled GMO ingredients and report these products to GP. GP will publish the names of these products in the internet.

GP announced its new campaign on April 2, as the proposed **German genetechnology law** was being debated in the German Upper Chamber, the Bundesrat. Germany's Lower Chamber, the Bundestag, has already passed the proposed genetechnology law. The conservative parties (CDU/CSU and FDP – generally supportive of biotech) form a majority in the Bundesrat, but are a minority in the Bundestag. The Bundesrat rejected the proposed law, which had been drafted by the Green-led Federal Ministry of Consumer Protection, Food and Agriculture (BMVEL), and forwarded it to the Bundesrat/Bundestag Conciliation Committee.

The conservative majority of the Bundesrat has proposed more than 100 revisions to the proposed law. The main point of criticism is the proposed **liability rules**. These rules would make a GMO farmer liable for economic damage resulting from GMO presence in a neighboring non-GMO crop. The GMO farmer would be liable, even if he followed the official BMVEL rules for good management practices (GMP) for GMO crop production. To cover liability cases where full compliance with the GMP rules has been met, the conservative parties propose that a liability fund be created. This fund would be financed by all parties involved in GMO production (farmers, seed companies, the biotech industry etc.) and the government.

BMVEL Minister Kuenast complained about the Bundesrat decision to send the proposed law to the Conciliation Committee, because this will also delay implementation of special penalty rules for food and feed manufacturers that falsely label products containing GMOs. The proposed penalties range up to Euro 50,000 or a 5-year prison sentence. Critics of the proposed law claim that this proposed penalty level would be absolutely excessive.